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**AMERICAN HOME FURNISHINGS HALL OF FAME
UNVEILS PLANS FOR NEW PERMANENT HOME**

HIGH POINT, N.C., Oct. 18, 2019 — The American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame Foundation has unveiled the vision and plans for transforming its new permanent home at 311 S. Hamilton Street into a 23,500 sq. ft. showplace worthy of the industry. Designed by Freeman Kennett Architects, it is scheduled to open in April 2021.

The result is a space that is spectacular in both form and function. “The redesign of this building will take your breath away,” says David Gebhart, president of the Foundation board of directors, and founder and CEO of Global Views. “Not only will it be a premier gathering space for the industry, it will house the Foundation’s memorabilia, library and offices, as well a theater, galleries, special events and more. Its architectural details are matched only by its incredible flexibility and functionality.”

“We want the new Hall of Fame building to tell the powerful, evolving story of the home furnishings industry,” says Peter Freeman, AIA, of Freeman Kennett Architects. “Its concept is intentionally tied to the history and heritage of home furnishings in a way that is modern, up-to-the-minute, and able to adapt with new technology and design directions in the industry.

Glass, steel, concrete and digital imagery reinterpret elements of masonry buildings that were common to early furniture manufacturing. A clerestory roof introduces day lighting and ventilation, looks decidedly current, yet mimics techniques formerly used in American factory construction.

“The front entrance includes a glass curtain wall and structural steel system with a form that emulates a traditional masonry factory building,” Freeman says. “The most imposing design element is the two-sided Dynamic Story Wall, a digital matrix of interlaced LED screens, which will be used to tell the many stories of the home furnishings industry on a grand scale.” Visible from the street on one side and throughout the interior on the other, the two-story video wall is inviting and inspiring.

Another key design element is the Presentation Staircase. “It is impressively scaled to be more than just stairs,” Freeman says. “It connects the two levels while providing a platform for presentations, extra gathering space for the Celebration Hall or tiered seating with an enhanced view of the Dynamic Story Wall.”

As the primary event space, the Celebration Hall will accommodate 400 to 500 for a large gathering or 150 to 200 for a seated dinner. Upper gallery balconies enhance gathering capabilities, and the glass boardroom, which is among the largest in High Point, has operable glass walls that open for further expansion. Near the entrance, a coffee and cocktail bar is designed as a welcoming feature as well as for special events. A full-service hospitality kitchen will provide comprehensive food service.

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The Theater is a more intimate area, equipped with a wide range of audio and video presentation options and formats, as well as special lighting and acoustics to enhance the interactive experience. A curved partition will serve as the Tribute Wall honoring those who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Three lower-level and four upper-level museum quality gallery spaces provide flexible opportunities for a large single exhibit or multiple smaller exhibits. A Discovery Center, a Library and History Centers will include dedicated research and storage areas with specialized climate control systems to house valuable documents and artifacts.

Last year, the Foundation hired its first curator and historian as an important step in fulfilling the part of its mission to preserve the history of the home furnishings industry and to tell its story. The Hall of Fame has been instrumental in preserving the organization's current memorabilia and extensively researching and visiting other museums to lay the groundwork for its new home furnishings exhibits. The new space will allow the Foundation to expand its collections and to preserve materials for future generations. Plans call for a rich ongoing calendar of traveling exhibits from around the world.

"The intention is that this building will become a destination for our industry to gather as well as the public interested in the Home Furnishings Capital of the World™," Gebhart says. "The space will be inviting and experiential not only for its exhibit and displays, but for the industry, the city and the state."

Located on South Hamilton between Green and Russell streets, the building formerly was the showroom for Flair Enterprises. It is located just one block from the International Home Furnishings Center in the heart of the High Point Market.

Capital campaign donors include Michael Amini, AICO; Aminy Audi, L. & J.G. Stickley; The BB&T Foundation; Donald Belgrad; Andy Bernstein, FurnitureDealer.Net; Irv Blumkin, FVB Foundation, Inc.; John Bray, Vanguard Furniture Company Inc.; Jeff Child, R.C. Willey; Randy Coconis, Coconis Furniture; Bruce and Kena Cohenour; J. Don Coleman, Coleman Consulting LLC; Patrick Cory, Joseph Cory Holdings LLC; The Furniture Foundation; Jerry Epperson; Richard Feng, Markor; Hassell Franklin, Franklin Corporation; David Gebhart, Global Views; Janet Guy, Prestige Arts/Art Trends; Jena Hall, Jena Hall Associates; Haverty Furniture Companies; Keith Koenig, City Furniture; Samuel Kuo, Lacquer Craft USA; Amir Loloj, Loloj Rugs; International Market Centers; Alex Peykar, Nourison Industries; Mark Phillips, Phillips Collection; Martin and Mary Ann Ploy, AICO; Karen and Steve Pond; Lawrence Rogers; Schwarz Properties; Chad Spencer, Dufresne Spencer Group; and Bill and Julia Wittenberg, Klausner Furniture Industries.

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The American Home Furnishings Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc., is an industry-wide organization founded to preserve its history, to celebrate exceptional individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the U.S. home furnishings industry, and to inspire a new class of innovation and leadership. Membership includes eligibility to nominate candidates for consideration by the Selection Committee, and the opportunity to help preserve the history and heritage of the industry. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, 92 percent of all funds support our history and leadership programming. The organization currently is based in High Point, North Carolina, at 202 Neal Place, and can be reached at 336.882.5900.

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